



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
Department of Agricultural Resources
251 Causeway Street, Suite 500, Boston, MA 02114
617-626-1700 fax 617-626-1850 www.Mass.gov/AGR



MITT ROMNEY
Governor

ROBERT W. GOLLEDGE, JR.
Secretary

KERRY HEALEY
Lieutenant Governor

DOUGLAS P. GILLESPIE
Commissioner

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Contact: Vanessa Gulati
617-626-1119

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES POSTS ALTERNATIVE MEAT PROCESSING LISTING

In response to the tragic fire at the Adams Farm Slaughterhouse in Athol yesterday, the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources has posted on its website a listing of other federally inspected meat slaughtering and processing facilities in the Northeastern states.

"The horrific loss sustained to the business owned and operated by the Adams family will have a ripple effect throughout the livestock industry in Massachusetts and other parts of New England who use their services," said Commissioner Doug Gillespie of the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources. "Our Department has worked diligently with the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) regional office in Albany, and the other New England Departments of Agriculture over the last 48 hours to compile this list of other federally inspected meat slaughtering and processing facilities in the region, so the livestock producers who would normally use the Adams Farm service have other options," Gillespie continued.

The listing can be found at www.mass.gov/agr and lists the federally inspected slaughter and processing facilities in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine. Federal inspection of slaughtering and processing facilities is required for meat products to be offered for sale to the public.

"The Adams family has indicated they are planning to rebuild their business, but that will take several months. In the interim many livestock producers will need to make other arrangements until the Athol plant is back on line," said Kent Lage, Assistant Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources. This year Adams Farm was accepted into the Massachusetts Farm Viability Enhancement Program, which will enable the Department of Agriculture to assist with the re-design, financing and business plans for the new facility. Lage added "We have already been in contact with several of our partners to assemble the necessary resources that may be required and who are willing to help the Adams' rebuild."

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